EST I Writing: Parallel Structure Rules

Mastering Grammatical Parallelism & Syntax Alignment for American Diploma Students

EST I GRAMMAR REFERENCE GUIDE

1. Parallel Structure in Lists & Series

When items, phrases, or clauses are joined in a list using conjunctions (e.g., *and*, *or*, *but*), all elements must maintain the exact same grammatical structure.

Key Patterns:

A. Matching Nouns:

INCORRECT: *The position requires leadership, efficiency, and **being punctual**.*

CORRECT: *The position requires leadership, efficiency, and **punctuality**.*

B. Matching Verbs (Tense and Form):

INCORRECT: *During the program, students analyze data, conduct experiments, and **wrote** lab reports.*

CORRECT: *During the program, students analyze data, conduct experiments, and **write** lab reports.*

C. Matching Gerunds (-ing) or Infinitives (to + verb):

INCORRECT: *The mentor advised the athlete to practice daily, eat well, and **getting** enough sleep.*

CORRECT: *The mentor advised the athlete to practice daily, eat well, and **get** enough sleep.*

2. Parallel Structure with Correlative Conjunctions

Correlative conjunctions work in pairs. The grammatical structure that follows the first part of the pair **must exactly mirror** the structure that follows the second part.

The 4 Core Correlative Pairs:

- `Not only ... but also`
- `Either ... or`
- `Neither ... nor`
- `Both ... and`

INCORRECT: *The new software **not only improves** system security **but also data processing speed**.*
(Structure issue: "not only" + verb + noun phrase, vs "but also" + noun phrase only)

CORRECT: *The new software improves **not only system security but also data processing speed**.*
(Both sides now mirror each other with matching noun phrases)

3. Parallel Structure in Comparisons

When comparing two things using `than` or `as`, the items compared must be grammatically parallel and logically matched.

INCORRECT: *Designing a sustainable building is more complex than **to renovate an old one**.*

CORRECT: *Designing a sustainable building is more complex than **renovating an old one**.*

4. EST-Style Practice Questions

Question 1: To complete the biology project, students were required to collect field samples, categorize the organisms, and they had to record their observations in a journal.

- **A)** NO CHANGE
- **B)** recording their observations in a journal.
- **C)** record their observations in a journal.
- **D)** their observations were recorded in a journal.

Answer: C | *Explanation: Maintains base verb parallel form with "collect..." and "categorize...".*

Question 2: The lead researcher was recognized not only for her ground-breaking discoveries in genetics but also awarded for her dedicated mentorship of graduate students.

- **A)** NO CHANGE
- **B)** but also for her dedicated mentorship of graduate students.
- **C)** but also her dedicated mentorship was awarded to graduate students.
- **D)** but also for mentoring dedicatedly graduate students.

Answer: B | *Explanation: Mirrors "for her ground-breaking discoveries" with "for her dedicated mentorship".*